

Message Text

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14

ORIGIN AF-05

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AF/W - MR. ALLAN MCKEE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (BIESTER, EDWARD G., JR.)

SUBJECT: CODEL BIESTER: PAPER ON NIGERIA BY CONGRESS-
MAN BIESTER

REF: LAGOS 6135, STATE 146361

1. REGRET OMISSION. REMAINDER OF BIESTER PAPER
FOLLOWS:

2. "... CONCLUSION, THEN SUCH A PEOPLE POSSESSES THE
ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE CONFUSED AND
UNSTABLE WORLD AROUND THEM. GENERAL GOWON HAS EXEMPLI-
FIED THESE TWO PRECIOUS ATTRIBUTES -- RESOLUTION COUPLED
WITH THE CAPACITY TO RECONCILE DIFFERENCES THROUGHOUT THE
TURBULENT PERIOD SINCE SEPTEMBER 1967.

3. "A CONTINENTAL LEADERSHIP ROLE APPEARS AN OBVIOUS ONE
FOR NIGERIA GIVEN ITS MILITARY STRENGTH, ECONOMIC POTEN-
TIAL, AND THE SHEER SIZE OF ITS POPULATION. RELUCTANCE
PUBLICLY AND OVERTLY TO ASSUME THAT ROLE MAY REPRESENT
A KEEN UNDERSTANDING OF GHANA'S EXPERIENCE. ATTEMPTS TO
ASSUME A LEADERSHIP ROLE BY YOUNG NATIONALISTIC COUNTRIES
MIGHT ACTUALLY NEGATE THE POSSIBILITIES OF PLAYING THAT
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ROLE. NIGERIA DOES NOT HAVE THE MEANS TO ACT AS A MEDIATOR

FOR EVERY AFRICAN DISPUTE, BUT THE NIGERIANS PROBABLY
WILL BE REQUIRED TO SPEND MORE OF THEIR RESOURCES FOR
THE BETTERMENT OF POORER NEIGHBORS. WITH THE AGING OF
MORE TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN AFRICA -- HAILE SELASSIE AND
JOMO KENYATTA, FOR EXAMPLE -- GOWON MAY FIND THE PRESSURES
TO LEAD PUSHING NIGERIA BEYOND A MORE CAUTIOUS TIMETABLE."
ROGERS

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NNN

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*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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